



FACT SHEET #15:

What's Being Done to Control Dust in Maricopa County?

A 3,000 square-mile area including the urbanized areas of Maricopa and Pinal Counties has been designated a “Serious” nonattainment area, because it does not meet the federal health standards for particulate air pollution (PM₁₀). In addition to the negative health effects, being a nonattainment area is a stigma that can slow economic growth and development.

A PM₁₀ Plan for Maricopa County was approved by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency on July 25, 2002. The plan shows that the area will attain the Federal PM₁₀ standards by the end of 2006. The Plan has 77 measures to reduce particulate air pollution from significant sources such as agriculture, wood burning, driving on paved and unpaved roads, vacant lots, gasoline and diesel exhaust, and fast-food restaurants. The measure that is most effective in reducing particulate air pollution is Maricopa County’s Dust Control Rule 310. By 2006, Rule 310 is expected to reduce airborne particulates produced by construction sites and other earthmoving sources by 72 percent.

Compliance with Rule 310 is essential for the Valley to meet the federal air quality standards. If we don’t, there will be serious consequences, such as the loss of Federal dollars needed to build highways and light rail. And Maricopa County residents and visitors will continue to breathe particulate air pollution. So it is important for every construction site to do its part to comply with Rule 310 and “bust the dust.”